

Claims:

1. A method of providing an accounting service in a mobile communication system, comprising the steps of:

- 5 accessing (**M1**, **M2**) a chargeable functionality of said communication system by a user (**U**), by
 authenticating said user (**U**) by a
 authentication/authorization server (**AA-S**), and
 authorizing said access of said user (**U**) by
 10 said authentication/authorization server (**AA-S**); and
 indicating (**M2**) an accounting server (**ACC-1**) for the
 user (**U**) by said authentication/authorization server
 (**AA-S**), wherein
 said accounting server (**ACC-1**) is physically
 15 separated from said authentication/authorization server
 (**AA-S**).

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein said authentication/authorization server is in a home network
 20 of said user.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein said chargeable functionality is a visited network of said mobile communication system.

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4. A method according to claim 1, wherein said chargeable functionality is a service of said mobile communication system.

30 5. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein said accessing step is performed by sending an authentication/authorization request message (**M1**) from an authentication/authorization client (**AAA-C**) to which said

user (U) is currently attached to said authentication/authorization server (AA-S) which replies by sending an authentication/authorization answer message (M2) to said authentication/authorization client (AAA-C),
5 and wherein said answer message (M2) includes said indication of an accounting server (ACC-1) for said user (U).

6. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 5,
10 wherein said authentication/authorization server directly indicates said accounting server to said authentication/authorization client which is handling said user and keeps a corresponding account.

15 7. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, comprising the further step of
requesting (M3) an accounting for said chargeable functionality from said indicated accounting server (ACC-1) by said authentication/authorization client
20 (AAA-C).

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein, during said accessing step, said authentication/authorization client receives a ticket indicating that said user has been
25 granted to access said chargeable functionality, and said ticket is sent to said accounting server.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein said accounting server checks whether accounting for said user is to be
30 started.

10. A method according to claim 8, wherein said ticket contains at least one of the information of the group of:

to which user it belongs, when the access was granted, for how long the access was granted, and from which client the access was granted.

- 5 11. A method according to claim 8 to 10, wherein said ticket is signed by the authentication/authorization server so that it is verified to the accounting server that the authentication/authorization server really has made the ticket.
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12. A system for providing an accounting service comprising means adapted to perform a method according to any of the claims 1-11.
- 15 13. An accounting server device comprising means adapted to perform respective steps of a method according to any of the claims 1-11.